



THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU • TUESDAY • JUNE 09, 2020 • ₹7.00 • PAGES 18 • LATE CITY EDITION



READ SHARE FOLLOW
newindianexpress.com
facebook.com/newindianexpress
twitter.com/newindianexpress
instagram.com/newindianexpress

**INDIA, CHINA STAND-OFF
TALKS POSITIVE, SAYS RAJNATH**
Defence Minister Rajnath Singh called Saturday's high-level talks to end the ongoing military standoff at LAC positive

THRUST ON MODI-XI CONSENSUS

Rajnath said the two countries agreed to resolve disputes, present and future, through talks. His comments came on a day when China's foreign ministry said, "the two sides need to implement the two leaders' consensus," referring to PM Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping agreeing on not letting border differences become disputes

STAND-OFF MAY STRETCH LONGER

"The India-China border dispute is a long-standing dispute. We want this border dispute to get resolved quickly. In no case we will let anyone hurt our respect and pride," Rajnath said
Saturday's talks, however, failed to end the stand-off, which Army sources now say could stretch for another month

3,488 km
IS THE LENGTH OF THE INDIA-CHINA
LINE OF ACTUAL CONTROL (LAC)

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VILAYATNAD • BENGALURU • KOLCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • DELHAI • BHUSAVAR • SHIVAJI • MANGALURU • THIRUPUR • TRICHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPUR • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • WARRANGAL • TADIPALLIGUDEM • MAGADHUPUR • THIRUPUR • KALABURGI

Bank credit growth may crash to 1% in FY21, warns Crisil

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@NewDelhi

WITH the Covid-19 pandemic almost certain to result in GDP contraction this fiscal, the rate at which banks disburse loans is likely to slow down drastically. According to domestic agency Crisil Ratings, bank credit growth is likely to nose-dive to a multi-decade low of just between zero and one per cent in the current financial

year (FY21). This number had stood around 6% in the previous year.

"This crisis is unprecedented and so will its economic fallout be," said Krishnan Sitaraman, senior director, Crisil Ratings, noting that subsequent lower capital expenditure demand and lower discretionary spends will slow down credit disbursement significantly. In fact, credit growth is expected to remain positive only

due to lower repayments, owing to the moratorium and capitalisation of accumulated interest. "The corporate loan portfolio, which constitutes almost half of total credit, is expected to be the worst-hit, and de-grow this fiscal. The lockdown has led to significant disruption in operations with limited capacity utilisation across sectors," he added. The new estimates are a far cry from Crisil's rather optimistic

earlier prediction, made in February, of 8-9% bank credit growth for the current year. "In other words, the impact of the pandemic on credit growth will be a whopping 800 basis points (bps)," the agency warned. Crisil Ratings expects GDP to contract by 5% during FY21, toeing the general line taken by most economists that negative GDP growth this fiscal is a near certainty.

CONTINUED ON: P12

'PVT BANKS HESITANT TO GIVE MSME LOANS'

While state-owned banks such as State Bank of India have started extending loans under the ₹3 lakh crore credit scheme for the MSME sector, private lenders are dilly-dallying in implementing the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme, RSS-affiliated industry body Laghu Udyog Bharti told Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday

KARNATAKA COVID-19 BATTLE

308 TEST POSITIVE ON MONDAY
5,760 Total Cases as on Monday
2,519 Total Recoveries so far
64 Deaths

Kalaburagi continues to remain a hotspot for Covid-19, as it reported 99 cases on Monday, taking the district's total count to 759.

MIXED RESPONSE TO LOCKDOWN IMPACT

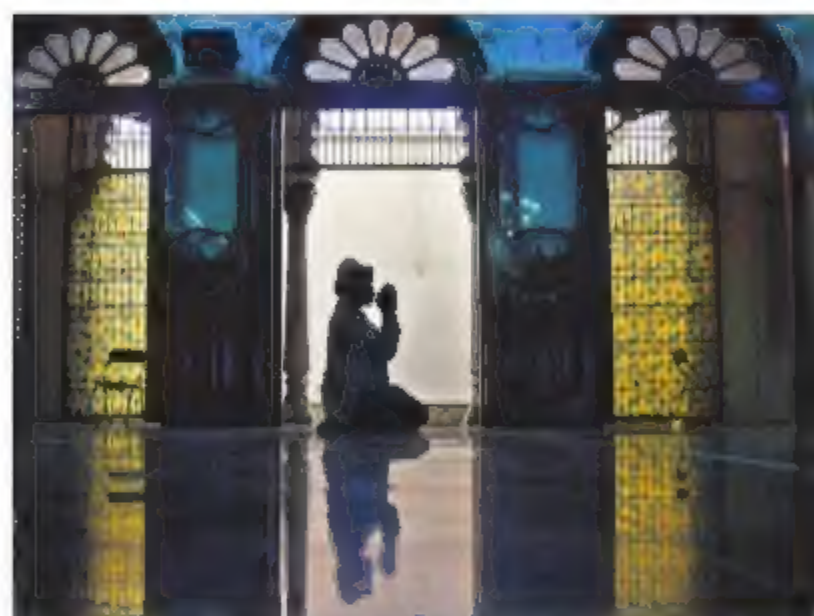
The lockdown was effective and essential and has resulted in the desired benefit. The cases only saw a slight uptick when inter-state borders opened and we saw an influx of people from Mumbai, Pune and other parts of Maharashtra. Our testing capacity is good with aggressive testing taken up by deputy commissioners, as a result of which we are seeing more positives. The rate of increase can be attributed to Maha returns, of whom 80-90% are already home. So, in the future, in a week or so, we will not see much rise in cases.

— Dr H K Sudarshan, public health expert and chairman of Karnataka Covid-19 technical advisory committee

In Western countries, the lockdown was not complete as it was in India, with essential services remaining open. There was no need for hoarding there, as was the case here. The lockdown in India acted against national interest and was a result of lack of imagination and consulting. We did an overkill of the lockdown and achieved hardly one-fifth or one-tenth of its benefit. Rich people took the lockdown seriously but poor people could not, resulting in transmission.

— Dr John Jacob, a virologist at Christian Medical College, Vellore

Full Reports P4



With places of worship opening their doors, a man offers Namaz at the Jamia Masjid in Bengaluru on Monday | SHIVRAM BH

City opens, more with fear than euphoria

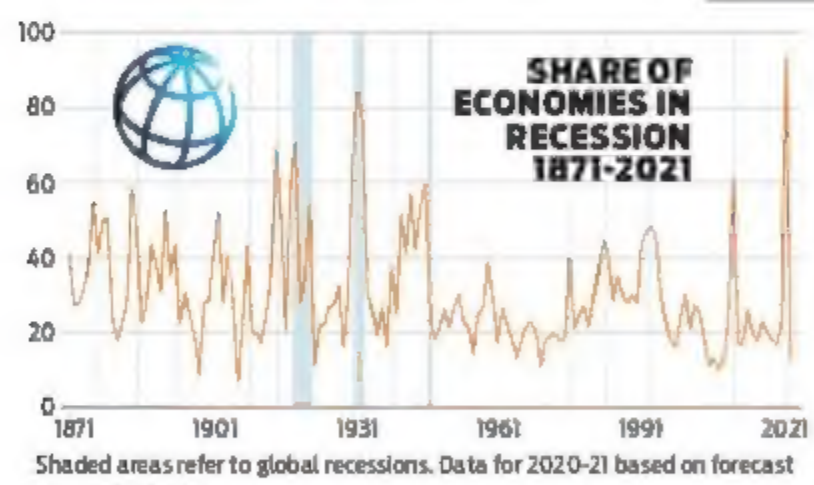
BOSKY KHANNA & PREEJA PRASAD @Bengaluru

AFTER 76 days, restaurants, malls and religious places opened on Monday with small wary steps and precautions in place. But unlike liquor stores — which drew hordes when they opened on May 4 — these establishments attracted just a fraction as the fear of Covid-19 dampened the excitement of facilities opening.

There was a mixed response from diners to restaurants in the city. While many were scared of infection and hygiene, in case of pubs and bars, the timings were an issue as they have been directed to close by 9 pm.

Veerendra Kamat, Secretary, Bruhat Bengaluru Hoteliers' Association, said there were more takeaways than dine-ins. "It will take at least 10-15 days for things to settle. On any normal day, the ratio of takeaways to dine-ins was 25:75, but now it is just 50:50," he said.

"The first day, considering it was a Monday, the numbers were better than anticipated and visitors followed social distancing," said Touseef Ahmed Khan, GM, Forum Mall, Koramangala. P2



World Bank projects India's GDP growth at -3.2% for 2020-21

SPILOVER IMPACT

From 4.2% in FY20 to -3.2% for FY21, the contraction projected by the World Bank for India is rather steep. The pandemic and the multi-phased lockdown have clearly choked the economy. The contraction in the Indian economy will have a spillover impact in South Asia, says World Bank

ADVANCED ECONOMIES

It expects economic activity among advanced economies to shrink 7% in 2020

WHY RECESSIONS ARE SCARY

Deep recessions are likely to do long-term damage to investment, erode human capital through unemployment, and hurt global trade and supply linkages

14 RECESSIONS SINCE THE 1870s

Global economy has experienced 14 recessions since 1870 — in 1876, 1885, 1893, 1908, 1914, 1917-21, 1930-32, 1938, 1945-46, 1975, 1982, 1991, 2009 and 2020. This year's is going to be the worst, the World Bank warns

WORLD GDP TO CONTRACT 5.2%

Global economy will shrink by 5.2% this year, representing the deepest recession since the Second World War

LOCKDOWN IMPACT

Shutdown measures to contain the coronavirus pandemic have plunged the global economy into a severe contraction as demand and supply, trade, and finance have been severely disrupted

15-30% people living in containment zones could be infected, cured: Survey

SUMI SUKANYA DUTTA @NewDelhi

THE first population-based serosurvey in India, conducted to assess the extent of exposure to SARS-CoV-2, the pathogen behind Covid-19, found that as many as one-third of the population in various containment zones in hotspot cities may have already been infected and quietly recovered.

The survey conducted by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), whose preliminary findings have been shared with the Union Cabinet Secretary and the Prime Minister's Office, found that in several containment areas in high-load districts, 15-30% of the population has been exposed to the infection, government sources told this newspaper.

Serosurvey involves collection of blood samples of people to test for the presence of antibodies specific to a pathogen. In this case, it was meant to test for IgG antibodies against SARS-CoV-2 that normally appear 14 days after the infection and continues to be present in the blood serum for months.

The ICMR, with help from the National Centre for Disease Control, World Health Organization's India office and state governments, had collected

nearly 24,000 samples from 70 districts in the country from randomly picked individuals.

These included the 10 hotspot cities — Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Pune, Delhi, Kolkata, Indore, Thane, Jaipur, Chennai and Surat — that contribute nearly 70% to India's total case load. Five hundred samples each from 10 randomly chosen containment areas in every city were taken.

In addition, 400 samples each from other 60 districts across 21 states — categorised on the basis of low, medium and high case loads — were also collected.

"Barring the two hotspot cities of Surat and Kolkata and six other districts, we now have results from all other sites. It shows that infection size in many containment areas in the worst-hit districts is 100-fold to 200-fold higher than the cases reported at those sites," an official privy to the survey report said. Data for eight districts is still being analysed and will be added to the final report.

Another official said the 100-200 times higher infection size were mainly found in Mumbai, Pune, Delhi, Ahmedabad and Indore, among others, which have been the hardest hit by the coronavirus. CONTINUED ON: P8

Key questions

What is serosurvey?

It means testing blood samples in a population for a specific purpose. In this case, the samples were tested for presence of antibodies against SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19. The presence of antibodies would confirm the person was exposed to the virus and has since recovered

How was this serosurvey conducted?

Nearly 24,000 samples from 70 districts across 21 states — including 10 hotspot cities — were collected and tested. Data analysed for 62 districts on dates so far

What are the findings?

Very high exposure level in some cities and very low exposure in rural areas. In some areas, 15-30% of the population is exposed to infection. In some spots, infection size is 100-200 times higher than the cases reported there so far

What are the implications?

It gives policymakers and epidemiologists data that can be used for disease control and mitigation. In some badly-hit areas, the population is closer to herd immunity than elsewhere. Herd immunity for Covid-19 is expected when 60-70% of the population is exposed to it

CENTRAL PROBE

Elephant might have accidentally chewed explosive pineapple: MoEF

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kochi

PRIMARY investigations have revealed that the pregnant elephant that died in Kerala might have accidentally consumed a fruit stuffed with explosives, the Environment Ministry said on Monday.

The ministry said that locals in Kerala resort to an illegal act of planting explosive-filled fruits to stop wild boars from entering plantation farms.

The 15-year-old elephant had suffered grievous injuries as the fruit exploded in its mouth in the Silent Valley forest. It died in the Velliyar River a week later on May 27.

In a series of tweets, the ministry said one person has been arrested in connection with the incident. Mannarkkad DFO K K Sunil Kumar, who is leading the investigation, told *TNIE* that a search is on for two others who are absconding.

Minister of State for Environment Babul Supriyo requested people not to believe 'rumours'.

The ministry also observed the Kerala government seems to be handling the matter in an unbiased manner

Ram temple work to begin tomorrow

Ayodhya: The construction of the Ram temple here is set to begin on Wednesday, when the first bricks will be laid for its foundation, according to a spokesperson for the head of the temple trust. The event will be marked by prayers to Lord Shiva at the Kuber Tila shrine on the Ram Jannabhoomi site, allocated for the temple in a historic Supreme Court verdict last November. The work of laying the foundation of the temple will begin after these prayers.

Four Hizbul militants killed by forces in J-K

Srinagar: Security forces killed four Hizbul Mujahideen militants on Monday in Jammu and Kashmir's Shopian district, taking the total number of slain terrorists during the past 24 hours in South Kashmir to nine. Praising the role of the Jammu and Kashmir Police, CRPF and the army, General Officer Commanding (GoC) 15 Corps Lt Gen B S Raju said the operation was conducted in a "smooth manner" with no collateral damage to civilian property. P10

MLC polls postponed

Elections to the four seats in the Legislative Council — two graduate and two teachers constituencies, which were scheduled to be held later this month — have been deferred due to the Covid-19 situation, the State Election Commission said on Monday. P3

GARMENT WORKERS' WOES

For them, hunger a bigger worry than Covid

CHETANA BELAGERE @Bengaluru

JUST before the lockdown, Sunitha was working overtime to meet the fast-fashion demands of European capitals. Now three months later, she is among the thousands of Karnataka's garment employees who are left jobless.

Known as the 'Garment Capital of India', Bengaluru alone which has more than 400 units, is seeing a closure of businesses and thousands of garment workers losing jobs. It is the largest garment manufacturing cluster and hosts several large-scale companies such as Shahi Exports, Laguma Clothing, Arvind Mills, Gokaldas Exports, Madura Garments,



Garment workers at a unit in Peenya Industrial Estate, Bengaluru | RUPHOTO

among others. "Already, we have received about 900 complaints across the state about employees, mostly women, being sacked from jobs; intentionally not being provided transport, only 50 per cent of salaries paid and worse," said Prathiba R, president of the Garments and Textile Workers' Union.

The impact of coronavirus on retail is staggering, as the thousands of orders placed daily by Western retailers to supplier-factories in the state have suddenly stopped. Facto-

ry owners face financial ruin, while the livelihoods of thousands of garment workers hang by a thread.

"I have pawned my handicapped daughter's mangalsutra as a last resort to run the family. Her husband has kidney issues and my daughter can't work. I was the only one who earned nearly Rs 8,000 per month and some extra money to run the household. Today, I along with 300 others have been asked not to report to work for the next one month and we know what this means. We will be jobless soon," laments Mamatha Gowda, an employee at a garment factory in Srirangapatna.

CONTINUED ON: P5

